

Dr. Morse.

Sacred Performances

AT THE

DEDICATION

OF THE

Baptist Meeting-House in Charlestown,

MAR 12, 1801.

CONSISTING OF

An INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS,

BY JEDIDIAH MORSE, D. D.

A SERMON, adapted to the Occasion,

BY SAMUEL STILLMAN, D. D.

AND AN

ADDRESS on the Recognition of the Church,

BY THOMAS BALDWIN, A. M.

443

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY MANNING & LORING, NO. 2, CORNHILL.

CHARLESTOWN, May 12, 1801.

At a Meeting of the Church,—

VOTED unanimously, That the thanks of this Church be presented to the Reverend Gentlemen who officiated at the Dedication of our House of Worship, for their very acceptable services, and that copies be requested for the press.

Order of Performances.

I. By the Rev. JEDIDIAH MORSE, D. D.

Read the 24th Psalm—*The earth is the LORD's, &c.*

ADDRESS explanatory of the occasion.

PRAYER.

Read 2 Chronicles, chap. vi. verses 12, 14, 18—42.

DEDICATORY POEM—Sung.

II. By the Rev. Mr. GRAFTON, of Newton.

DEDICATION PRAYER.

III. Read and Sung DEDICATORY HYMN.

IV. By the Rev. SAMUEL STILLMAN, D. D.

A SERMON on Brotherly Love and Christian Fellowship
from 133d Psalm, 1st verse—*Behold, how good, and how
pleasant, &c.*

V. By the Rev. THOMAS BALDWIN, A. M.

The RECOGNITION of the CHURCH—An ADDRESS

—The Fellowship of Sister Churches given.

Concluding PRAYER, and singing 132d Psalm—*Arise, O
King of grace, arise, &c.*

VI. Sung an ANTHEM from 48th Psalm.

VII. BENEDICTION by the Rev. Dr. STILLMAN.

Order of Proceedings

I. By the Rev. John H. [illegible]

At the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

And the [illegible] of the [illegible]

Resolved, That [illegible]

Resolved, That [illegible]

Resolved, That [illegible]

II. By the [illegible] of [illegible]

[illegible]

III. By the [illegible] of [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

A D D R E S S

EXPLANATORY OF THE OCCASION.

BY JEDIDIAH MORSE, D. D.

WE are assembled, Christian brethren and friends, for no trivial or novel purpose. Our business is serious and important, and calculated to interest all the best feelings of our hearts. We have come to present ourselves before that God, whom the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain—but who yet condescendeth to dwell with men on the earth, and to *consecrate* this house erected for Him.

In performing this sacred service, we do but imitate the practice of holy and devout men, in all past ages of the world, who, excited either by the express command of God, or by the secret intimations of his HOLY SPIRIT, and acting, at the same time, agreeably to the dictates of right reason, and from a regard to the decency and fitness of things, have built houses for the public worship of God. And with a view to impress the minds of the worshippers with the greater reverence of the Divine Majesty, and to fill them with devotion and humility, it has been a pious custom, in a formal and religious manner, to separate these places for sacred uses. Of these religious transactions, God, at sundry times, and in various ways, has manifested his divine approbation. When Solomon had closed his admirable prayer at the dedication of the temple, immediately “the fire came down from

from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices ; and the glory of the LORD filled the house."

When we review the circumstances which have attended the erection of this house ; and consider, that the design originated in a Society of Christian brethren, of different denominations, assembled for prayer and religious improvement ; that party and sectarian views and feelings appear to have had no part or lot in this business ; that it has been the honest and sincere aim of those concerned, to furnish the means of religious instruction, to a large portion of the inhabitants of this increasing town, who could not otherwise be conveniently accommodated, and thus to advance the important interests of religion and morality : When we consider, also, that the plan, which seems to have been intimated with satisfactory clearness from heaven, has been prosecuted, hitherto, without accident or obstruction, in perfect harmony with the Congregational Society in this place, and with unusual celerity and success, we cannot entertain a doubt, but that the God of order, of peace and love will smile propitiously on us, and grant his divine approbation of our present purpose of setting apart this convenient house, beautiful for situation, as the temple on the holy hill of Zion, for the performance of the various services of public, religious and social worship.

With humble confidence, then, let us, Christian brethren and friends, in the name of Jesus Christ, unitedly and fervently ask his divine presence with us, and his blessing on this our undertaking.

A
DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING

OF THE

New Baptist Meeting-house

IN CHARLESTOWN,

MAY 12, 1801.

BY SAMUEL STILLMAN, D. D.

BOSTON:
MANNING & LORING.

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BY SAMUEL SHILLMAN, D.D.

NEW YORK:
J. J. LORING.



A

DEDICATION SERMON.

Pfalm cxxxiii. 1.

*BEHOLD, HOW GOOD, AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS, FOR
BRETHREN TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY.*

AMONG a great variety of subjects that might, with propriety, be considered, at the opening of a new place for public worship, the preacher gives the preference to this, because most expressive of the circumstances that have brought us together. This neat and convenient house did not originate in angry controversy, in fondness for separation, nor even in difference of religious opinions; but in a sincere desire to promote the great interests of religion and morality, as a common cause.

Many families in the town, it was found, could not be accommodated with pews in the Rev. Dr. MORSE's meeting-house: whence the inquiry arose, whether it was not duty to endeavour to build another place for public worship. Christians of

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different denominations were engaged in the inquiry, and were of one mind as to the answer. And as there was a considerable number of families of the Baptist denomination, of respectability and interest in the town, who were obliged to go to Boston for a complete enjoyment of their privileges, it was unanimously thought best, that the house to be built should be for that denomination. This was the voice of all. Not one dissentient ; not one moment's controversy about it. As far as my knowledge extends, I may safely say, This is an unexampled instance of candour and affection among Christians of different denominations. And I embrace this public opportunity of declaring, that my worthy and reverend brother, the minister of this town, with whom I have enjoyed an agreeable acquaintance from his first settlement in it to the present time, has assured me of his hearty concurrence in this matter ; believing that it will terminate in the more general diffusion of religious knowledge, and the promotion of the best interests of the town ; therefore takes a part in the public services of this day. And what increases the pleasure of the occasion is, that from the commencement of this business to the present moment, not a single circumstance relative to it has happened, to interrupt the affection and harmony of the town. May this house, which we this day dedicate to God, remain a pleasing monument of mutual candour among Christians of different opinions, till time shall be no more. Here may the gospel be preached in its purity ; and thousands of redeemed sinners, at the last great day,
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rise up and call *you* blessed, through whose exertions this place of public worship hath been erected. Let him who passeth by to worship, and all who shall come up to this house of the Lord, continually say, *Behold, how good and pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity.*

I will not take up your time with an inquiry concerning the occasion of this Psalm, about which there are various opinions ; but pass at once,

- I. To consider who are intended by *brethren*.
- II. Explain what it is for *brethren to dwell together in unity*.
- III. Finally, make it appear that this is *good and pleasant*.

I. We are first to ascertain the character of *brethren*.

1. All men are brethren, considered as descendants from one common parent. *God*, says Paul, *hath made of one blood all nations, to dwell on all the face of the earth.* They were created by the same almighty hand, out of one common lump of matter ; and therefore are nearly allied.

2. They are brethren inasmuch as they all stand in the same relation to the first *Adam*, as a covenant head : hence they share with him in the sad effects of his apostacy. *In Adam*, says an apostle, *all die* : that is, by virtue of their relation to him, they become mortal. *By man sin entered into the world,*

world, and death by sin ; and thus death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. In another place we are told, that *by the disobedience of one, many are made sinners* : not only become mortal, but are made sinners. These passages, I conceive, plainly teach us, that *Adam* was the covenant head of all mankind ; who are in the same melancholy situation of sin and death. They have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. One has no more to boast of than another. All are guilty, though not equally so, and in a condition of moral inability. If they are ever saved then, they will all be indebted to grace alone.

3. But there is a more important sense in which this appellation is used in the sacred scriptures, and in which we use it on the present occasion, to denote *real believers*. It was a term of frequent use among the apostles and primitive Christians. Paul directs his epistle to the Colossians, *To the saints and faithful brethren in CHRIST*. And when he dismissed Onesimus, after his conversion, to his master Philemon, he exhorts him to “ receive him not now as a servant, but above a servant, *a brother beloved*.” With this term, you are sensible, the ancient Christians addressed each other, as a mark of their mutual affection and attachment. With what propriety they did so, will appear in the following observations.

1st, Believers are brethren in this appropriate sense, because they are the objects of the same *divine love*. The LORD has his own people among
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all the nations of the earth, and among all the different classes of Christians.

The Jews thought that they only were the objects of the love of God ; and of course, treated the Gentiles as aliens. But when CHRIST came, he discouraged this injurious distinction, by shewing mercy to the Gentiles, and by sending his apostles to preach the gospel to all nations. They also plainly taught, that in CHRIST JESUS there was neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free ; but that CHRIST was all, and in all ; and that in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.

The same contracted spirit has been observed in too many professing Christians, who are disposed to exclude from the divine affection, those who differ from them *even* in those things that are not essential to salvation. This temper ought to be resisted, as being inconsistent with the truth of things, and calculated to destroy that charity which is the bond of perfectness. They who are the objects of the same love of God, ought to love one another.

2dly, Believers are brethren, because they all *belong to the same blessed family*. By adoption they become heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with JESUS CHRIST. By the act of adoption, an orphan or stranger becomes an heir as certainly as if he had been so born. So it is in this case. *Because they are sons by adoption, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* And this
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is the case with all real believers. They were sons in the divine mind prior to their receiving the Spirit of adoption; and because they were so, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, to ascertain their sonship, or to seal them to the day of redemption.

In this sense, then, all believers, amidst their various differences, are brethren.

3dly, They are so, likewise, because they are *redeemed by the same precious blood of CHRIST*, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot. One price was paid for all the heirs of promise: whence it is plain, that they were equally dear to the Son of God, and ought to be dear to one another. What an argument is this, for love to the brethren! which John enforces with peculiar warmth: *If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* He carries it so far as to say, that we ought to die for the brethren, if necessary. Will you, Christians, be opposed to, or not love them for whom CHRIST died? Remember that they are precious to him as the apple of his eye. And can you stand aloof from each other, bite and devour one another? God forbid. Rather, let brotherly love continue and increase, till you shall reach that glorious world, where you shall see eye to eye.

4thly, Believers are brethren, because they have been called *out of darkness into marvellous light by the same Holy Spirit.* He is the life and source of all real religion in the hearts of sinners. It is he only who can stop the sinner in his dangerous career of sin,

sin, by convincing him of his total depravity, his guilt and danger ; and thus oblige him to cry, *What shall I do to be saved ?* By him he is enabled to believe in CHRIST, as the end of the law for righteousness. He wounds, and he heals. - He kills, and he makes alive. He is a quickening Spirit. He searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. This change he sometimes produces in the hearts of sinners, in the most unexpected and surprising manner, even when they have not enjoyed the usual means. But whatever diversity there may be in the circumstances that attend this change, the change itself is the same in all. Which naturally leads me to say, that all real believers are brethren, because,

5thly, *They know the same things*, drink into the same Spirit, and are all one in CHRIST JESUS. Among true Christians of all ages, and of all nations, there is, if I may be allowed the expression, the most striking family likeness ; which consists in the following particulars : They are convinced of their entire depravity, of their infinite guilt and unworthiness, of the justice of God in their eternal condemnation. They esteem CHRIST precious, and fly to him alone for salvation. They renounce all confidence in the flesh, and give him all the glory of redemption. They hate sin for its own sake. They groan under the body of sin, and pant after perfect holiness. They are careful to maintain good works, are attached to the cause of CHRIST, and study to promote it. They love those who bear the image of
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of CHRIST, whether rich or poor, bond or free. In a word, their all-prevailing desire is, that CHRIST may be magnified in them, whether it be by life or by death. This being the case, surely they are brethren, and formed by divine grace for the same enjoyments. I add,

6thly, That they *are heirs of, and shall forever enjoy, the same heaven.* JESUS CHRIST is gone to prepare mansions for them; and by the various dispensations of his providence, his word and Spirit, he makes them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. They are, then, emphatically *brethren*, being the objects of the same everlasting love of GOD; adopted into the same heavenly family; redeemed by the same precious blood of CHRIST; are called by the same Spirit, out of darkness, into the light of the gospel; experience the same things in nature, though not in degree; and are to dwell together forever in the same heaven; there to love and adore the same object, who appears in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that had been slain.

II. We shall now proceed to shew what is to be understood by *brethren dwelling together in unity.*

There is a strange kind of charity, which some people plead for, that has a tendency to annihilate the distinction between truth and error; or, to make it a matter of indifference, which a man believes. We have nothing to do, say they, with a man's creed, only with his conduct. No matter what his faith is, provided his life be good.

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Do these men consider to what lengths this principle will naturally lead us, if admitted? We may embrace the most opposite and contradictory opinions. The question is not, whether a man believe the doctrines of CHRIST or of Mahomet, but whether his life be good. It is therefore a matter of indifference, whether he be a disciple of CHRIST, or of Mahomet. This kind of charity, if followed, will land us in deism, where, no doubt, it originated. But those of you, who believe Christianity to be a divine religion, will give it your most decided negative, because false as a principle, and fatal in its influence.

There are others who profess to believe the gospel, yet deny what a great number of Christians, in all ages of the church of CHRIST, have placed among its most essential doctrines. Of this class are they who deny the true and proper Deity of JESUS CHRIST, and affirm that his blood is of no more value to expiate guilt, than the blood of any other man. I ask, my brethren, how a man, who believes JESUS CHRIST to be very and eternal God, and that there is no redemption but through his *atoning blood*, can dwell together in unity with him, who denies the LORD who bought him? It is impossible in the nature of things, because their ideas of the character and work of CHRIST are infinitely different. This difference will force itself upon them in their solemn acts of prayer and praise; for one will ascribe divine honours to the SON of GOD; the other will call this idolatry. If they are engaged in the work of the ministry, it will influence their public preaching.

One will exalt CHRIST as a divine person, GOD manifest in the flesh : the other will say many good things of him as a man, a great prophet, a teacher sent from GOD, a super-angelic being, but not divine. One will insist on the atonement of CHRIST as the *only sure* foundation of a sinner's hope : the other will lead him to expect forgiveness from the mere mercy of GOD, and the sincerity of his repentance, without an atonement. I might trace this difference in many other instances ; but enough has been said to shew, that they cannot walk together in unity, while they thus differ about the very essence of Christianity.

I ask again, How can he, who has a tender concern for the honour of CHRIST as an ALMIGHTY SAVIOUR, connive at an error of such magnitude, which, in his view, robs him of his essential dignity, and destroys the foundation of a sinner's hope of forgiveness ? For if JESUS CHRIST be not truly and properly GOD, our prospects of pardon through his one offering for sins are disappointed, and we must seek some other method of salvation : And the great body of our godly reformers, with the noble army of pious martyrs, who sealed their religion with their blood, were idolaters, and were left to die in a most important error : for they believed JESUS CHRIST was truly GOD ; and as such, paid him divine honours. And not only they, but a crowd of modern Christians of eminent character, have left the world in the same sentiments.*

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* The late Dr. MATHER, of Boston, bore his dying testimony to the truth of our LORD's divinity, saying to me, a little before his death, " I will never trust my soul but with an ALMIGHTY SAVIOUR."

At the same time, give me leave to say, in the words of the excellent Dr. ABBADIE, with little alteration, "I distinguish — between the *persons* of our adversaries, and the *cause* which they plead. Towards the *former*, I have all the sentiments of love and compassion, which are due to my erring fellow-mortals. I admire the parts, the learning, and the gifts, which God has bestowed on some of them. And though they do manifest violence to the scriptures, in my view, I would not accuse them of speaking contrary to their own light. — As to their *cause*, I ought not to be censured for endeavouring to represent it in its own colours, in all that deformity which necessarily attends an hypothesis, that is contrary to divine revelation and the spirit of true religion. This is my duty, and one end of my ministry."* Especially, my brethren, at my time of life. I am not a young man, but am finishing my ministry, and feel myself under the most solemn obligations to bear my faithful, and, for aught I know, last testimony, to the glories of IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US; through whom alone I expect everlasting life.

The right of private judgment of these our mistaken friends, is undeniable. If, in the exercise of it, they embrace the greatest errors, they must answer for it. To their own Master they stand or fall.

Our heart's desire, however, and prayer to God, is, that they may be brought to embrace the *whole truth* as it respects JESUS CHRIST, before their feet
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* Deity of CHRIST essential to Christianity, p. 3.

stumble on the dark mountains; and although our ideas of him are now infinitely different, that we may ultimately see eye to eye, and unite to adore Him, who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood; who thought it no robbery to be EQUAL WITH GOD.

I do not mean to suggest, by any thing that has been said, that we are to expect to find among good men, an exact agreement in religious sentiment and practice. They always have differed among themselves, about some things of less importance in religion. This we may reasonably expect will be the case till that period shall arrive, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the LORD.

It is a pleasing circumstance, however, that God hath raised up faithful witnesses in all ages, who have agreed in the most important truths of the gospel.*

Neither does dwelling together in unity suppose, that they should relinquish any religious opinions or practices that they believe to be divine, though of comparatively small importance. Such a sacrifice it would be uncandid and unreasonable to require as a condition of union, and criminal to make. Nor would it accomplish the end for which it might be made. On the contrary, it would create mutual uneasiness. Christians would naturally think hard of each other for requiring such a surrender

* See Bishop NEWTON on the Prophecies, Dis. xxiv. p. 1.

Mr. TOPLADY's Historic Proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England, vol. i. p. 149—212.

surrender of conscience ; and their own minds would most assuredly condemn them in a cool hour of reflection, for complying with it. Good men must, at all hazards, keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards all men. What has been said on this part of the subject is equally applicable to Christians of all denominations. They are all equally bound to buy the truth, and to sell it not.

Good men, then, may be said to dwell together in unity, when they unite in matters of religion as far as they can agree ; and when they can unite no farther, agree to differ, and to allow each other the liberty they take of thinking for themselves. In this case, there should be no reflections on each other ; no, not a hard thought should be encouraged by either side, provided they wish to maintain the true spirit of the gospel, which allows every man to be fully persuaded in his own mind. But at the same time, let me repeat it, that we are not permitted to favour the mistakes of our Christian friends, or to make light of any divine truth, however small.

I add, once more, that dwelling together in unity by no means supposes, that we ought not to use our best endeavours to convince one another of those errors, into which we may have fallen. This is a duty we owe to each other, which ought to be performed with meekness and affection.

There are several considerations I now beg leave to impress on the minds of my hearers, that are calculated

calculated to promote mutual candour among Christians. The first is, We ought not to think that we ourselves *only* are conscientious; but that our brethren, who differ from us, are as conscientious as we are, and as anxious to know and do the will of God.

The second is, that the difference among good men is mutual. The fault, if fault there be, is also mutual. Who then shall be censured?

The third consideration is this, There are great and good men among the different denominations of Christians. Why may we not think that the LORD permits these differences, that we may have an opportunity of exercising that spirit of mutual forbearance, so well pleasing in his sight, and so beneficial to society?

III. It remains that we shew that it is *good* and *pleasant* that brethren dwell together in unity.

It seems by the expressions of the Psalmist, as if he had in view, at the moment, some particular instance of brotherly love, as we now have:—*Behold! how good, and how pleasant it is, &c.* See, as if he had said, its advantages exemplified.

It is good, as it is a Christian temper, a love to the brethren as such; and is perfectly agreeable to the genius of the gospel, which is love in its nature and tendency.

It is good or pleasant, as it naturally tends to promote happiness among good men. A man who
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is under the influence of this temper, feels happy in himself, and seeks the happiness of others. He will be ready to forgive an injury—to put the most favourable construction on doubtful conduct. He will be candid toward those Christians who differ from him ; but he will not be so complaisant as to sacrifice any truth or duty.

It is good, that is, useful. When Christians are thus united in love, they can accomplish great things in the world, and in the church. They encourage one another when called to do or suffer the will of God. They are said to provoke one another to love and good works. They can, when united, do much towards the relief of the poor saints, and the support and general propagation of the gospel. We have a pleasing evidence of this in the Missionary Societies in Europe ; in which we find a most uncommon union of Christians of different denominations. Whatever may be the issue, the union has been both surprising and delightful. They have united in their endeavours to send the gospel among the pagans, as a common cause, without regard to those less matters that distinguish them as denominations. Thus should it be with all good men. They should stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

Omitting those reflections that naturally arise from the subject, I shall conclude with an address to that church of Christ which will, in future, meet in this place ; and which will this day be recognized

nized in the most public and solemn manner by my reverend brother.

DEARLY BELOVED IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

IN the year 1665, the First Baptist Church in Boston, from which most of you have been dismissed, originated in this town. To-day she sends you back at your own desire, in conjunction with our friends from the Second Baptist Church in Boston, to form a church where she began. But how great the difference between that period and this! Then the right of private judgment was denied; now all is candour, love and friendship. This event is surely providential: to human agency alone it cannot be ascribed.

The churches you have left have dismissed you with all that Christian affection, which has arisen from a long and pleasing acquaintance with you, and from your constant endeavour to behave as becomes the gospel: believing, at the same time, that this event will terminate in the better accommodation of yourselves and families, and the advancement of the interests of religion and morality. Go and prosper, and the LORD be with you.

Your present condition is new and interesting. Various duties devolve on you as a church of Christ. The first and the most important to yourselves, your families, and the town in general, is, the choice and settlement of a minister. Be not hasty in this matter. Be extremely careful that he
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be a man of real, of experimental religion—decidedly in favour of the doctrines of grace, so called ; who shall be determined to know nothing among you save JESUS CHRIST and him crucified ; and who will not shun to declare the whole counsel of GOD.

We most earnestly pray, that the great Head of the Church may bless you with a pastor after his own heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby ; for whose happiness and support, we are persuaded, you will use your best exertions.

In the admission of persons into the church, be careful to examine them, both as to their experimental knowledge of the truth, and their lives and conversation. In the discharge of this part of your duty you will find a great difference among candidates for admission. Some of them will be able to give a clear account of the great things God has done for them—others will come trembling, lest they should eat and drink unworthily ; and who can only say, *Whereas I was blind, I now see*. You who are strong, will bear the infirmities of the weak ; and imitate the blessed JESUS, who gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom ; who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

In the exercise of the discipline of the church, be strict and impartial. Never suffer sin upon a brother, nor an unworthy member, knowingly,

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to sit down at the Lord's table. Keep yourselves pure.

Live in love among yourselves, studiously preserving the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. Be candid towards all Christians who differ from you. Treat all men with affection and kindness. And carefully preserve that harmony in the town and between the two religious societies, in it, which hath been so pleasingly displayed on the present occasion.

To conclude. How extremely flattering are the circumstances of Charlestown this day. Behold her rising, like the phoenix from her ashes, into elegance, wealth and greatness. Our prayer to God is, that she may be as remarkable in future for her piety, prosperity and happiness, as she hath been for her sufferings in the day of our national calamity. Into his holy keeping we commit you as a town, as churches, and as brethren. Live in love, and the God of love and peace will be with you. To him be glory forever.

AN
ADDRESS,

DELIVERED TO THE

BAPTIST CHURCH IN CHARLESTOWN,

MAY 12, 1801,

AT THEIR

PUBLIC RECOGNITION BY A COUNCIL OF SISTER
CHURCHES.



BY THOMAS BALDWIN, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN BOSTON.



DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

THE Churches now convened agreeably to your request, by their ministers and messengers, having fully examined the papers you have laid before them, containing an account of all your proceedings relative to your becoming a distinct visible Church ; have directed me in their behalf to inform you, that they are fully satisfied with your proceedings, and consider them to have been regular and according to the gospel.

They have also examined your articles of faith, and judge them to contain the leading and essential doctrines of evangelic truth.

We

We do therefore, in this public manner, express our hearty and entire approbation of your faith and conduct, and wish you a rich blessing out of the house of the LORD. We view you as a regular Church of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, vested with all the powers and privileges which we as Churches severally enjoy ; and as a token of the Christian affection and esteem of the Churches present, I present you the *Right-Hand of Fellowship*.

By this significant sign, we express the interest we feel in your happiness and prosperity ; and solemnly pledge ourselves to afford you every assistance in our power, and which your circumstances may render necessary ; not doubting but in return we shall receive the same from you. These mutual assurances, *dear brethren*, arise from that long and intimate acquaintance we have had with you. Often have we taken sweet counsel together, and gone in company to the house of God ; and nothing but a sense of duty could have reconciled us to this painful partial separation. May the LORD ever preserve our union and friendship.

From this day forward, brethren, you will consider yourselves as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. O that your light may so shine that others, seeing your good works, may glorify our Father, who is in heaven.

Much you have already experienced of the divine goodness in your proceedings, and much you may still expect, if you walk humbly before God.

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You will therefore permit me to exhort you, to study to promote that spirit of brotherly affection, which at present so remarkably prevails among you. Especially endeavour, in every suitable way, to strengthen and increase the friendly intercourse so happily subsisting between you and the other religious Society in the town.

Your situation, brethren, is peculiarly interesting and pleasant. How often upon occasions like the present, have all the angry passions been excited, and every discordant sentiment set in opposition ; by which means those aversions and prejudices have been established, which a lapse of years could hardly obliterate. But here, we behold nothing but concord, peace and brotherly affection ! Truly this is the LORD's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.

The uncommon harmony which has marked the whole series of events relative to your present situation, cannot fail to impress your hearts with the liveliest sentiments of gratitude to the great AUTHOR of your mercies, and lead you to see your increasing obligations to live in love and peace, so that the God of love and peace may dwell with you,

As he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation and godliness. And that the best of blessings may ever rest on you and yours, on your children, and on your children's children, on the other church and congregation in
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the town, and on the whole Israel of God, we will now and at all times most devoutly pray.

And now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and at last to present you faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy ; to the only wise God our SAVIOUR, be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

Dedicatory Hymn.

LET flowing numbers sweetly rise,
And waft our praises to the skies,
For all the blessings life bestows,
And all the joys the GOSPEL shows.

Here in thy COURTS we prostrate bow,
To offer up the solemn vow ;
To dedicate this SACRED PLACE,
And celebrate REDEEMING GRACE.

Now may the KING of ZION hear !
His GLORY in this HOUSE appear !
And, as in *Israel's* ancient days,
Accept the *offering* and the *praise*.

Here may the *saints* with TRUTH be fed,
Pure from the gospel's FOUNTAIN HEAD ;
Here let the *sinner* hear his doom,
And timely "*flee the wrath to come.*"

O may thy CHURCH, in every place,
Increase in numbers and in grace ;
Till all the ransom'd millions rise
To shout REDEMPTION through the skies.